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AUGUST MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held on Thursday evening, 8th inst., at eight o'clock, in the Board Room of the State Board of Harbor Commissioners, Room 19, 2nd Floor, Ferry Bldg.

The evening will be devoted to vacation experiences. Both members and visitors who have had interesting observations or experiences during their vacations are invited to contribute to the evening's entertainment.

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AUGUST FIELD TRIP will be taken on Sunday, 11th inst., to Tennessee Cove, Marin County. Purchase round trip tickets to Manzanita, 48c, and take 8:45 A. M. Sausalito Ferry. Bring luncheon and filled canteens. Leader, Mr. Lockerbie.

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SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIP will be taken as usual to Baumberg on Sunday, September 15th, Mrs. Kelly and Mr. Arthur Myer, leaders. Further details will be published in the September GULL.

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The following was presented before the Audubon Association on June 13th, by Mr. E. C. O'Roke, Biologist, Division of Fish and Game:

SOME ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN THE LIFE OF A QUAIL

Like many of the rest of you, perhaps, it was not my privilege to have been born and raised in California where, compared to the outdoors elsewhere, nature is just a little more charming. Consequently any knowledge that I may have acquired of the fauna and flora of our State previous to my domicile here was obtained from the printed page. Not being a seasoned movie fan and never having fallen into the clutches of some of the promoters in southern California, it is altogether possible that my early knowledge of California was not strictly orthodox. Be that as it may, the subject about which I wish to speak for a while tonight deals to some extent with environment. In this connection you will pardon me if I digress for a moment to speak of the environment of the redwoods before coming to my subject.

According to the printed page, the great trees lived in silent valleys and towered high above the clean damp forest floor. Circles of giant trunks formed cathedral rooms, wherein the sighing of the top winds made soft, restful music. In the midst of this beauty and this silence, and strangely affected by the fragrance of the forest, even an unemotional man of science would feel truly reverent towards all things that are.

Eventually I went to Muir Woods. It was on Sunday. The trees towered to the sky just as they had done in the story books, but the music of the top

winds was drowned out by the jazzy notes of a cheap phonograph in the hands of some merry-makers. The fragrance of the forest, in one restricted area at least, emanated from an Italian dinner being warmed up in a kettle over the community fireplace. In one of the cathedral groves, a group of noisy young people in their teens were flopping about singing "I Faw Down and Go Boom." Near another cathedral grove, an even noisier group of middle-aged loungers were arguing loudly in a foreign tongue. One of our party wondered what could be the ideals of people whose favorite outdoor sport seemed to be to enjoy the woods in this noisy and conspicuous manner, and someone who had a sense of humor remarked, "I believe their ideals are: I deals in old clothes."

But lest I get too far away from the subject, perhaps the thing that I am trying to bring out is that there are natural environments, man-made environments and man-contaminated environments. Time was when Muir Woods was a natural environment. When the conservationists saved it and modified it for the "benefit and enjoyment of the people" it still was a natural environment slightly embellished with man-made features. When it becomes a popular loafing ground for people who have no knowledge of and no appreciation for the things of nature, it takes on, in my opinion, some features of a man-contaminated environment.

From the standpoint of the ecological niches into which the Valley Quail fits, it is possible that he still lives in his natural environment just as he did before the days of '49. That he thrives and multiplies in a variety of man-made environments, and that he withers away in man-contaminated environments is common knowledge.

We are wont to speak of the Valley Quail as the "plumed knight of the chaparral." However, when we go seeking him we do not traverse the densely covered chaparral slopes. Rather do we go observing where the valleys intergrade into the open woods and where the brush thickets are sparsely scattered over the foothills.

The business of an animal, so the zoologists tell us, is concerned primarily with nutrition and reproduction. The Valley Quail is an animal in the sense that the zoologist uses the word. When a quail has successfully coped with all of the situations dealing with his own welfare and with the welfare of the race of quail, he has transacted the business of an animal. It would be superfluous for me to tell you that the Valley Quail is an abundant resident of certain wide environments in California, and that he is almost exclusively a vegetarian feeder. The nesting and feeding habits of quail are well known to you. You are, no doubt, also familiar with the roosting habits of the birds. You have seen the individuals of a covey gather together just about sundown to roost in the dense brush or in thickly foliaged trees some distance from the ground. You know that they take off at daybreak for their morning drink at a nearby spring or water-hole. How industriously the birds feed on the ground throughout the morning, and how they take their dust baths during the day are probably familiar sights to the members of this Audubon Society.

How the birds scatter when they are flushed; where they run when they alight; how they take refuge in the thick foliage of trees, and how they freeze to the ground and vanish into their surroundings are old stories to those versed in quail lore.

You do not have to see quail to be aware of their presence. You have learned to recognize their sputterings of alarm, their contented table talk while feeding, and the loud "tuck-ah' hoeh" of the male that tells you all is well. You may also have heard the vicious scold of the male in the mating season when another male gets too near a female in whom he is interested. You have your own opinions as to the nature of the sentinel posting, and have undoubtedly been just as baffled as I when you have tried unsuccessfully to find the tiny youngsters when you knew just exactly where they disappeared into the high grass.

(To be continued)

JULY FIELD TRIP: Kindred Spirits, nineteen in number, gathered on July 14th, 1929, at 41st Avenue and Lincoln Way to renew acquaintanceship with their feathered friends of Golden Gate Park.

The day was ideal but birds were not many. However, we proceeded about 9:45 A. M. across the road to a small pond where we were greeted with the cheerful notes of the song sparrow. The russet back thrush was blackberrying for his morning meal and thus too busily engaged to sing; a real loss, for one who has heard him in song always looks forward with joy to hearing him again.

In the pond we noted mother mallard and her family of but one; she did not seem as proud of her lone offspring as other mallards seen later on with families of from five to six.

A yellow warbler next attracted our attention and as we followed her to a clump of bushes we heard many voices from within, apparently demanding from her their breakfast.

That sociable, kindly little soul, the chickadee, also saluted us. He was seen and heard throughout the day, much to our delight. From this pond we went to a nearby lake where the party divided into two groups,—one led by Mrs. A. B. Stephens and the other by Miss Pringle. Here we watched female coots (mud hens) with families of two chicks and female mallards with from five to six little ones. It was very interesting to note the different manner in which mothers handle their brood. The coot is an active, nervous bird and it is constantly scolding its young for not doing this or that or disobeying orders. She may not be a Biblical scholar, but she certainly believes that "to spare the rod is to spoil the child"; frequently we heard the little ones cry out with fear as the mother proceeded to chastise them. However, the punishment was not severe and the little ones were more frightened than hurt. On the other hand, mother mallard swam along with no orders given, yet her family followed in a quiet, orderly way. Only once was confusion apparent and that when Mother Mallard suddenly stopped without giving the proper traffic signal and the six little ducklings collided, but order was soon restored, and they proceeded on their way in a dignified manner. A kingfisher was also seen.

Our two groups now re-united and that one led by Mrs. Stephens related having seen an interesting encounter between a stout-hearted song sparrow and a small snake. Mr. Song Sparrow strenuously resented his adversary's presence and proceeded to drive the latter from his domain by repeated and fearless attacks. No longer can we say that snakes can charm all birds and hypnotize them.

We circled still another lake and again saw mallard and coot families acting very much as before described.

By this time the lunch hour was near at hand so we endeavored to find a certain secluded lake known to our leaders, but our maps being incorrect we eventually lunched at Stow Lake. On our way we heard the delightful song of the vigors wren and saw several pine siskins in search of their food. After lunch we circled Stow Lake, noting on our way the Canada (?) and the Cackling Goose. Here, also, the Anthony Green Heron gave us a real surprise by flying into a tree near the waterfall. Another interesting feature arose out of the difficulty in determining whether a swallow feeding over the lake was a bank or rough-winged. Several members of the party watched this bird with interest for some time; he fed for a few minutes, then disappeared in a southerly direction, but shortly thereafter re-appeared. He was timed and it developed that he fed for two minutes, then flew away, returning in three minutes. This performance was repeated for a number of times and finally, so exact was his flight that his return could be calculated almost to a second. Several interesting questions arose out of this performance—one mathematically inclined might determine how far he flew when he left the lake. Again, did he leave to go to the nest and feed the young and if so, where?

From Stow Lake the party went to the Japanese Tea Gardens, around the Band Stand to the Aviary, a very interesting place to bird lovers, for many foreign birds are to be seen.

The American Eagle (the Bald Eagle) and the Golden Eagle, while not exactly dejected in appearance, are not the active, aggressive, proud birds that you see in their native state.

"An eagle always is a lonely one—
The far heights call to him and he must go;
But little birds cannot look on the sun,
And what an eagle knows they cannot know. . . .
When he is gone the small one knows, at last,
That there, above their heads, an eagle passed!"

The last cage contained several Great Horned Owls.

We would be remiss in our duty if we did not extend to our Leaders hearty appreciation for a well-conducted outing and a delightful day.

JOSEPH J. WEBB.

[The swallow referred to above was observed on three occasions since the field trip and was unquestionably a rough-winged swallow and is so listed.—Editor.]

At Stow Lake: American white and California brown pelican; Anthony green heron; Hutchins Canada, cackling Canada and common white-fronted geese; American pintail, Muscovy and Pekin ducks, mute and black swans.

Elsewhere: Common mallard and ruddy duck; coast California quail; American coot; northern western and California gulls; western mourning dove; Anna and Allen hummingbirds; western belted kingfisher; Monterey red-shafted flicker; black phoebe; yellow-bellied western flycatcher; rough-winged and barn swallows; Santa Cruz chestnut-backed chickadee; Pacific Coast bush-tit; Vigors Bewick wren; western robin; Pacific russet-backed thrush; California yellow warbler; San Francisco yellow-throat; golden pileolated warbler; California Brewer blackbird; English house sparrow; California purple finch; California linnet; northern pine siskin; green-backed Arkansas goldfinch; San Francisco spotted towhee; Point Pinos Oregon junco; Nuttall white-crowned and Santa Cruz song sparrows. Forty-four species.

Members present: Mr. and Mrs. Lockerbie, Myer and Stephens; Mrs. Bracelin; Misses Boegle, Cohen, Futhey, Kautz and Pringle; Messrs. Bremer, Bryant and Webb. Guests: Misses Berg and Kohl; Scouts Arthur Harris and Walter Samuel. Fifteen members and four guests.

After the trip through the park, several members of the party visited the cliffs near Land's End, where the Pigeon Guillemots had nests with half-grown young. Two nests were in full view and the young easily observed. Heerman Gulls were present in small numbers. A rock just beyond the wrecked ship at Land's End was covered with Cormorants sitting on their nests.

MRS. A. B. STEPHENS.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

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Meets second Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m., in the Board Room of the State Board of Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Building, Second Floor, Room 19.

Address Bulletin correspondence to the Corresponding Secretary.

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